



# National Perspective on the Watershed-Based Approach

EPA Region 9 Tribal NPS Workshop  
Dry Creek Rancheria  
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AK Native Village of Kivalina



## How Do We Restore Our Lands?

- American Indians have a distinctive cultural and spiritual connection to the land
- Many landscapes have been altered and often do not adequately support resources important to the tribes
- The **watershed approach** is a tool that can be used to heal and restore the bonds between the community and the land



## Targeting Best Management Practices (BMPs)

- Until you have quantitative knowledge of:
  - a) The nature and source of the WQ problem
  - b) Your water-quality based goals
  - c) The BMPs most effective at solving your impairments....

**YOU'RE NOT READY TO IMPLEMENT BMPS**

..... Unless you're lucky!

## The Watershed Approach

- NPS Program Priority
- Focus on the Watershed Approach
  1. Diverse, well integrated partnerships
  2. A specific geographic focus
  3. Action driven by environmental objectives and strong science and data
  4. Coordinated priority setting and integrated solutions



# Watershed Plans

(2000 Madison Report)

- Convergence of opinion that “watershed plans are necessary precedents for successful watershed management, protection, and restoration interventions..”
- In a recent study,.. “the use of watershed plans was the only factor with a high correlation with potential positive environmental outcomes.”

(Trout Unlimited & Pacific Rivers Council)



## Bit of History

- 1997: EPA was directed by the Clinton Administration to develop a Clean Water Action Plan
- In FY99 Congress authorized an additional \$100K (i.e. incremental funding) to be used to implement Watershed Restoration Action Strategies (WRAS).
  - Unified Watershed Assessments (UWA) used to develop WRAS were found not to be very effective– 319 program was not demonstrating water quality improvements
- FY02 319 Supplemental Guidance: 9 elements of a WBP first introduced
- FY03 319 Guidelines (most current): States are required to have WBPs in place in areas where incremental funds are used to implement BMPs.

## NINE Elements of Tribal Watershed-Based Plans (WBP) for NPS Program

- a) Identification of causes and sources at the sub-category level that need to be controlled to achieve WQ goals
- b) Description of the NPS management measures needed for implementation to achieve *water quality-based goals* and ID critical areas
- c) An estimate of *water quality-based goals* expected to be achieved (quantitative or narrative)
- d) Estimate of needed technical & financial resources

## NINE Elements of Tribal watershed-based plans for NPS Program, cont.

- e) Information/education component
- f) Schedule (who does what, when?)
- g) Description of measurable milestones for implementation
- h) Criteria to determine whether *water quality-based goals* are being achieved over time (adaptive management component)
- i) Monitoring component to evaluate effectiveness of implementation efforts

**Reference: FY 2007 Tribal 319 Guidelines**

<http://www.epa.gov/owow/nps/tribal/>



## Scale of Planning

- Tend to focus at the 10 or 12-digit HUC level

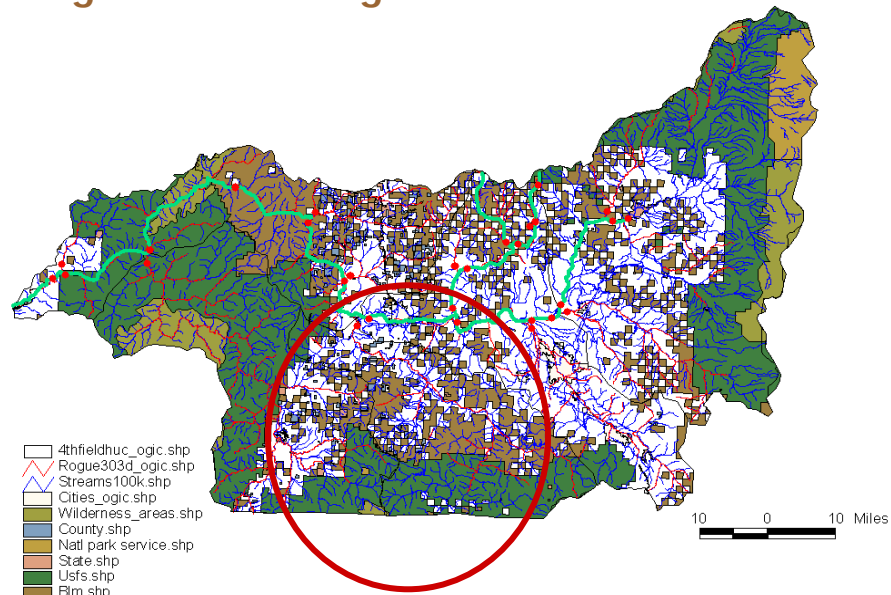
**Key:** Ensure that the area is small enough to manage, but large enough to address water quality impairments and concerns of stakeholders



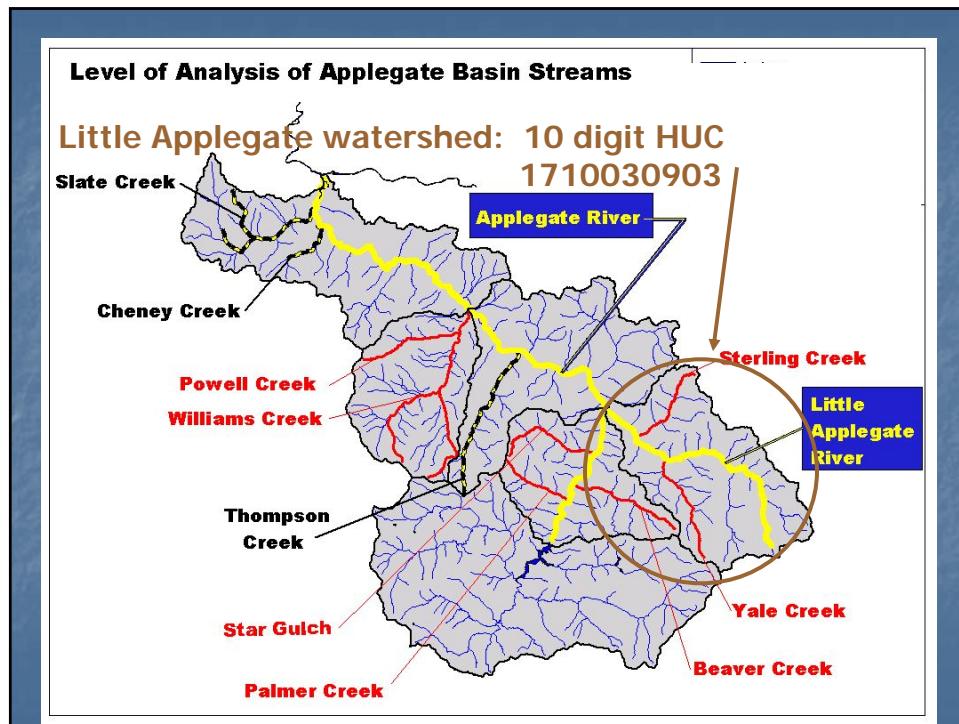
## Watershed Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC) Breakdown Example



## Rogue Basin: 6 digit HUC 171003









## Collaborative Problem-Solving

- **Vehicle through which traditional tools can be successfully applied to address:**
  - WQ impairments
  - endangered species
  - water allocations
  - flood and drought management
  - habitat restoration

**In balance with.....** Jobs, sustainable agriculture and forest management, urban/community development...

## Collaborative Problem-Solving

### Successful Collaboration Can:

- Address complex issues
- Leverage scarce resources
- Reduce conflict and litigation
- Promote innovation and integration

= **significant, measurable watershed improvements!!**



## Collaborative Problem-Solving

- Potential Barriers:
  - Multiple ownerships w/in a watershed
  - Uncooperative partners
  - Lack of funding/resources
  - Staff turnover

Ever feel like there's no way out?



## Collaborative Problem-Solving

- Potential Solutions:
  - Focus efforts on those partners willing to work with you—both inside and outside the reservation boundaries
  - Look for low-hanging fruit e.g. start by developing NPS ed. programs for kids—as you develop your program and gain trust and success, go for the more controversial issues
  - Explore other funding opportunities outside 319, 106, etc. to augment program and support staffing

## Don't Re-invent the Wheel to develop a WBP

- Reference your A&M plan
- UWA plans
- Reference other relevant documents to develop plan (e.g. NEPA documents, state/watershed group WBPs, WQMPs, etc.)
- Various EPA watershed tools
- Consult with your friendly Region 9 EPA staff – will “certify” your WBP contains the minimum 9 elements

Take Home Message: Talk to people and look for existing information!

## One More Thing...

- Tribes are not required to do WBPs
- HOWEVER, for competitive 319 grants, the Review Committee may give priority consideration to high quality workplans that develop and/or implement WBPs

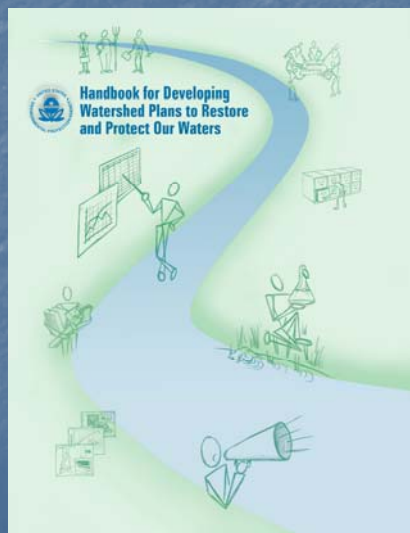


## One More Thing, part 2

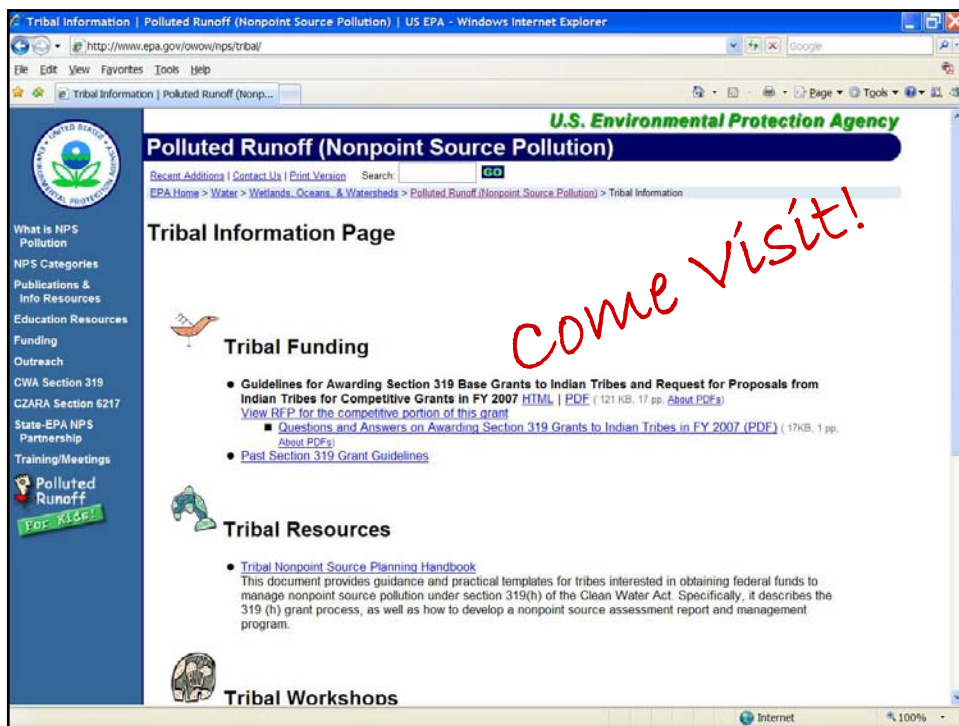
- Watershed-Based planning is probably the best tool we have right now to restore watersheds
- Ensures that every precious penny put into the ground is used effectively (mostly!)
- Gets people talking



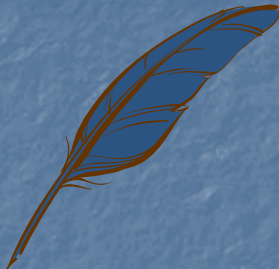
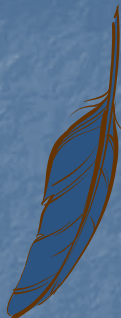
For Greater Detail on Developing WBPs...



[http://www.epa.gov/nps/watershed\\_handbook/](http://www.epa.gov/nps/watershed_handbook/)



# Contact Info

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